1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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special rare ceremonial occasions, because of the poverty of the food supply. The prevalence of such large camps among the Tiwi supports our general thesis that their native food supply was, for Australia, unusually plentiful, and that, in this sense, the Tiwi were a "rich" Australian tribe.

When camped together thus, the various households kept their distance, with the main fires and shelters of each separated by some twenty or thirty yards from the others, and during the day when everybody (except the old men) was out food collecting, the camps were almost deserted. When the food gatherers returned in twos and threes in the late afternoon, each household would cook and eat at its own fires as a unit, but if they wished, members of the smaller households, in which food returns for the day were probably smaller per capita than those of the bigger households, would "drop in during supper" upon the latter and supplement their own slender meal. Such hospitality was always extended on an individual basis; some member of the bigger household, usually a senior wife, would offer to one of the visitors a piece of meat or a dish of *kwoka* and if rebuked by her husband she would justify her act by mentioning her own kin relationship to the visitor, as if to stress that the kindness was her own individual gesture and did not commit the whole household to friendliness. Heads of large households were, however, generally very permissive if such handouts were made by senior females of their household to women or children of other households; it was handouts to adult male outsiders, especially young male outsiders, that were likely to provoke snarls or reprimands from the old man. This was in line with the general hostility of all old men to all young unmarried men that ran through all aspects of Tiwi culture.

After darkness fell, such a camp, with three or four households all resting within easy hearing distance of each other, became highly animated with men visiting from fire to fire as the women, who were not encouraged to walk about after dark, gossiped around their own fires. Little productive work could be done after dark, though a few cooking chores and food-preparation activities were performed, and most people went to sleep early unless the shouted conversations from fire to fire earlier in the evening had started an argument. If an argument did arise, the participants might go on abusing each other at long range for hours, with many of the listeners becoming involved and the rest remaining awake to enjoy the row.

Such rows were almost invariably outgrowths of the constant suspicion with which older men regarded younger men. This suspicion was in turn part of the price the Tiwi had to pay for the efficient type of food-production unit that they had evolved. This production unit, to reach maximum economic efficiency, required the vast majority of all females to be concentrated in the households of a very small number of husbands; namely, the very oldest men. As a necessary correlate, men under twenty-eight had no wives at all and very few men under forty had any wife except elderly and physically very unattractive widows. The efficient economic organization thus obviously created a moral and social problem—the problem of how to keep the unmarried young men away from the young women. The old head of the household had a double role:

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the relatively favorable food supply. Some of the Tiwi artifacts, particularly the highly decorative graveposts and ceremonial spears, are unique among Australian tribes, and the carving and painting of these graveposts and spears were skills possessed only by the senior men. They were provided with the leisure time necessary to develop and use these skills by the efficiency in food production of the large household which all old men were expected to accumulate with age, and which many old men did succeed in accumulating. We said earlier that the bigger the household, the better its members ate. We now add the further correlation that the bigger the household, the more leisure time was provided for its head to engage in manufacturing and artistic production. Tu'untalumi has been cited as an example of a large household head (twelve resident wives and thirteen children at home in 1928-29) who loved ceremonial affairs. It would be wrong to infer from this that Tu'untalumi only loved going to parties. He also loved preparing for them, and this preparation (for him as for all other senior men) included the manufacture of ceremonial spears, the preparation of graveposts, and the composition of songs and dances. In the long dull periods between trips outside his home district, he spent most of the days and many of the nights in the creation of these ceremonial necessities. He was not a full-time specialist in the sense that he made spears or posts to exchange with other men who had neither the time nor the skill—the rules of kinship required that every senior man make his own ceremonial spears and contract for his own posts. Tu'untalumi manufactured his graveposts to meet his own ritual obligations, but he took a more magnanimous view of those obligations than did most men. Put in our terms, we might say that he was wealthy enough (in the size of his household) to be generous with his own productions. One example of this attitude was his attendance at funerals that other men of equal kinship to the deceased did not find it necessary to attend; his frequent contribution of an extra gravepost to those provided by the chief mourners of the deceased was a similar gesture. "Tu'untalumi not only came to our mother's funeral, he also made a gravepost for it" was a very gratifying reflection for an obscure group of mourners to cherish among their memories, and of course it was acts of this sort that made the old man so well liked and admired. The economic point of the matter, however, is that only a man with as large a household as his could afford the gesture of giving away, in a situation where kinship obligations did not demand it, a gravepost that required about a week's full-time work.

It was, however, sad to observe that as an artistic producer Tu'untalumi, like many intellectuals in other cultures, tended to operate in too many media. His work as a composer of songs and dances was universally admired, but his graveposts, while appreciated, were not regarded as being as outstanding, technically speaking, as those of another old man, his crony Timalarua. In personality, Timalarua, a successful household head (eleven living wives, ten children at home), was quiet spoken, placid, and only mildly gregarious, and he is mainly of interest because in his leisure-time activity he paid but routine attention to song and dance compositions and concentrated rather single mindedly on making canoes, ceremonial spears, and graveposts. Fre-

1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
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quently, on the banks of some creek or river in Tiklauila territory, a party wanting to cross would scout around and find a canoe hidden in the weeds. Everybody would use it to cross, and the question "Whose canoe is it?" would elicit the reply, "Oh, it's always there and everybody uses it who wishes to cross." But if the question were "Who made it in the first place and put it there?" the answer would be, "Probably Timalarua. He likes making canoes; he makes them all the time." He also liked making spears and posts, though he was not as generous with them as Tu'untalumi. When one of his posts appeared at a funeral, people would point it out admiringly saying, "Timalarua made that one" and the speaker would trace the lines and designs on it with his finger, using much the same gestures as an art critic in a modern gallery. When a post by Tu'untalumi was identified and admired, however, the admiration was for Tu'untalumi the generous person rather than Tu'untalumi the artist. One was a wonderful craftsman, the other was a wonderful man. But acclaim given to the song and dance performances of the two men was just the reverse: the dances of Timalarua were adequate but not outstanding, those of Tu'untalumi were in a class by themselves.

Comparison of the activities of these two old men illustrates the impossibility of drawing any line, in the simpler cultures at least, between artistic production and technological production. The canoes and the posts manufactured by Timalarua and the posts manufactured and the new dances created by Tu'untalumi were all, so to speak, in the same category, as far as the Tiwi were concerned. The distinction we might make between the canoes as "useful" products and the posts and dances as ceremonial or artistic products never occurred to them. All were objects or products which only successful old men had the required skill and leisure to make. The fact that one old man liked to make canoes and leave them around for other people to use, and another old man liked to compose dances and perform his compositions widely for other people to enjoy, to them merely indicated individual taste and choice; it did not make the first a craftsman and the second an artist. This point has been overlooked in most of the theorizing about primitive art; perhaps a necessary first step in the development of primitive artists is for a society to be able to provide a few men with enough leisure time to be able to cultivate what might perhaps best be called hobbies, since a hobby can equally well be something "useful" to society, like canoe making, or something personally satisfying, like dancing or decorating graveposts.

The huge, heavy, painted spears made by these old Tiwi men were mainly used only for display, and even the oldest men were positive that this had always been the tradition. In fact, they seemed a little shocked at the implication that such beautiful and valuable objects could ever have been used for such mundane purposes as hunting or warfare. The cutting and painting of such spears took time and skill—more time than a gravepost—and no important man went to the smallest gathering without bearing on his shoulder at least half a dozen of these symbols of his importance. If on his way through the bush he sighted a kangaroo, he dropped his painted spears and stalked the animal with an ordinary spear, or more probably left it to the young men in the party who carried only ordinary ones.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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533 535 766 woman picking up the fruit and putting it in a bark basket. Then, bending over, as if carrying a heavy load, he danced around the *milimika* to the rhythm of the song and the beating sticks.

The rituals continued by the *pukamuni* men chanting a series of songs, first [177] about a boat, then its propeller, its sails and, finally, about the raising of its anchor. During the chanting, one or more aborigines, dancing to the rhythm of the songs, mimed the relevant actions.

766 These dances being finished, the participants of the *pukamuni*, putting their arms around the posts, cried the *amburu*, the mourning song; the men gave the honey and mosquito call, and the burial rituals were over.[90]

6. THE FACIAL DECORATIONS

302 The facial and body decorations of the men and women of the Tiwi, particularly those used during the final *pukamuni* rituals are, by far, the most colourful and elaborate of those used by any Australian aboriginal tribe.

During the early days of the century these decorations attracted the atten- [114] tion of Basedow (1913, pp. 291–321); Klaatsch (1907, p. 589), and Spencer (1928, p. 669), although nobody, of more recent years, has shown any interest in them.

Although there is little doubt that the desire for artistic expression and [775] personal beautification are factors behind this practice,[91] the fundamental idea [517] is that of camouflage, i.e., that the designs will so conceal the identity of the men and women taking part in the ceremony, that the *mopaditis*, who are present at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama*, will not recognize them.

So at both the *ilanias* and the final rituals of the *pukamuni*, everyone, even the little children who look on, is decorated. At the *ilanias*, however, which are performed every evening for some weeks, the decorations are usually simple and often crudely applied. Nevertheless, the aborigines, believing the [775] *mopaditis* to be stupid folk and easily misled, consider these simple decorations are an adequate safeguard.[92]

Pl. 28 illustrates a number of facial designs. Most of the originals of these [126] illustrations are colour photographs. Some, however, are based on crayon drawings[93] which my informants made to show the designs they would use for certain totems.

[90] See p. 61 for beliefs in the *mopaditis* of a small child.

[91] The men claimed that when their face and body decorations were good, the women [832] were attracted to them.

[92] Mountford, 1956, p. 437, illustrates a small child decorated at an *ilania*.

[93] The illustrations based on crayon drawings are, Pl. 28A, B, C, D.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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and the hardest and most durable timber available, spared no pains to make the best poles they could.[8]

When the "workers" had finished shaping the poles they notified the leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, who then gave the order for the poles to be scorched over a fire of blazing leaves to make a black ground on which to paint the design (Mountford, 1956, p. 427). Then, setting up the poles in a double row near the grave (Mountford, 1956, p. 426), the men began their task of decoration (Pl. 33B, D). At the same time, the ceremonial leader sent message sticks (p. 98) to notify the outlying groups that the final rituals were about to start.

The materials used for decoration were: red and yellow ochres from Imilu, Cape Van Diemen, a white ochre from a beach nearby, crushed charcoal for black, one of three types of fixatives, i.e., the white of turtle eggs, wild honey and beeswax mixed together, and the particularly gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids.

The ochres were crushed, mixed with water and one or more of the fixatives, and applied to the poles with brushes made from chewed strips of bark or vines (Fig. 2).

As I watched these primitive artists at work, I was impressed with the care they took in the arranging of their simple patterns, and with the obvious pleasure they experienced in their work. A quiet air of contentment pervaded the outdoor studio as each of the ten artists made his own pole as beautiful as possible.

Each artist appeared to be certain as to the designs he would use; there was no evidence of copying; in fact, *Pulanimbuwi* showed me the rough draft of the designs of his pole (Pl. 35A, B, Fig. 9), scratched on the back of a cigarette tin, days before he had even felled the tree.

A puzzling aspect of the *pukamuni* poles is the wide variety of the painted designs used, and the almost total absence in those designs of any reference to the myths and totemic localities.[9]

At first sight it would appear that the pole shapes, collected by both Fry and myself, were inventions of the moment. An analysis of the poles

have simpler shapes than at the present time, although Campbell (1834, p. 158) speaks about "poles with tops like lances and halberts". The aborigines may have used fire to assist in the shaping of the poles, in fact, this is suggested by Klaatsch (1907, p. 387).

[8] Not far from our camp was the deserted grave of the father of *Muramujua* (Pl. 38D), who died when his son was an infant. *Muramujua* was then over forty years old, yet the poles, although somewhat eroded and disarranged by the elements, are still in a fair state of preservation.

[9] This and old *Tjamalampua's* statement, p. 109, could indicate that the poles and their designs are a recent cultural trait that is not yet fully absorbed into the culture.